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**New Web Site for Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS) launches today**

***DECAL asking for public comment and feedback before GELDS are used in 2013-2014 school year***

**ATLANTA, Ga., (February 25, 2013)** – Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL) today launched a new web site to introduce and receive public comment on its new Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS). Beginning today, the web site can be accessed at [www.gelds.dec.al.ga.gov](http://www.gelds.dec.al.ga.gov). Visitors to the site can comment by clicking on specific age-appropriate indicators or by clicking the general comment button on the home page.

The GELDS are the product of an alignment study and revision project that began in 2010. The project stemmed from the need for higher-quality standards for birth to age 5 and a better alignment with the Common Core Georgia Performance Standards (CCGPS) for K-12. The new standards will take the place of the Georgia Early Learning Standards for birth through three and the Pre-K Content Standards. The GELDS will serve as a framework that outlines what children age birth to five should know and be able to do.

“From the beginning of this project, it has been our goal to roll out the new GELDS in helpful phases that will ensure all teachers have the knowledge necessary to be successful,” said DECAL Commissioner Bobby Cagle. “This new web site will allow stakeholders to examine the GELDS and make comments. Eventually, the site will serve as a portal for all GELDS information and resources.”

Cagle said his agency is working with Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) to produce short videos for the site to be used with professional development, lesson planning ideas, and an area for parent resources. GPB is also gathering footage at high quality learning programs that will showcase exemplary teaching practices using the GELDS.

“We will be able to attach video clips to each indicator on the website to show what that indicator would look like in action,” explained Laura Evans, GELDS standards coordinator. “As we move forward with the GELDS roll out this year, this new website will be a valuable resource for all stakeholders.”

In May, DECAL will offer a series of webinars on the GELDS. These webinars will be available via links on the new website. Also in May, DECAL will begin offering training and professional development for implementing GELDS. Training will include introduction to the domains, strands, standards, and indicators, and it will also offer help with planning lessons and appropriate activities around the GELDS.

Birth to five teachers can begin using the GELDS during the 2013-2014 school year with continuous support, training and professional development.

### **About Bright from the Start**

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning is responsible for meeting the child care and early education needs of Georgia’s children and their families. It administers the nationally recognized Georgia’s Pre-K Program, licenses child care centers and home-based child care, administers Georgia's Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) program, federal nutrition programs, and manages voluntary quality enhancement programs.

The department also houses the Head Start State Collaboration Office, distributes federal funding to enhance the quality and availability of child care, and works collaboratively with Georgia child care resource and referral agencies and organizations throughout the state to enhance early care and education. For more information, go to [www.decal.ga.gov](http://www.decal.ga.gov).